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Claims:

1. An assay method for detecting infectious prion protein in a sample from a mammalian subject, said
5 method comprising: obtaining a prion protein containing sample from said subject; contacting said sample with an agent which serves to digest non-infectious prion protein and to partially digest infected prion protein to yield a prion protein polypeptide residue; contacting
10 the digested sample with an antibody capable of binding to a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence Vc

(Gly-Gly-Gly-Trp)-Gly-Gln-Gly-Gly-R₁-R₂-His-R₃-Gln-Trp-
Asn-Lys-Pro-R₄-Lys-Pro-Lys-Thr-R₅-R₆-Lys(-His-R₇-Ala-Gly)
15 (Vc)

(wherein R₁ is either Gly or absent;
R₂ is either Thr or Ser;
R₃ is an amino acid residue selected from Gly, Ser and
20 Asn;
R₄ and R₅ are each independently either Asn or Ser;
R₆ is an amino acid residue selected from Met, Leu and Phe;
R₇ is either Val or Met; and wherein one or more residues
25 within brackets may be present or absent with the proviso that if they are present they are attached to the rest of the peptide in sequence); and detecting conjugates of said antibody and said prion protein polypeptide residue; characterized in that the detection
30 of said conjugates comprises chemical, biological or biochemical amplification of a detectable species and detection of the amplified species.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said subject
35 is human, preferably animate.

3. A method as claimed in either of claims 1 and 2 for

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detecting infectious prion protein associated with CJD, nvCJD or kuru.

4. A kit for use in the assay method of any one of
5 claims 1 to 3, said kit comprising:
- (i) a Vc-binding antibody;
 - (ii) optionally a Va-binding antibody;
 - (iii) optionally proteinase K;
 - 10 (iv) a material capable of chemical, biological or
biochemical amplification and detection or of
causing chemical, biological or biochemical
amplification of a detectable species, said
material optionally being conjugated to
antibody (i); and
 - 15 (v) optionally instructions for the performance of
said assay method.

5. The use of a iPrP binding antibody in the
manufacture of a medicament for use in the treatment of
20 human TSE.